

REMARKS

Applicant adds new claims 25 and 26; therefore, claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 17, 18, 20 and 22-26 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 25 and 26 parallel the canceled claims 19 and 21, with a further clarifying recitation added in the new claim 25. Entry and consideration of the new claims 25 and 26 are respectfully requested.

Applicant reiterates the patentability of independent claims 1 and 22-24.

In particular, as explained in great detail in Applicant's previous Amendments, O'Brien's distance "+/-d" does not represent the distance from the tip of the drawdown die 24 (i.e., a coater) to the web 12 (i.e., a support), instead distance "d" simply represents the amount by which drawdown die 24 must be adjusted by moving the drawdown die along the slot axis 32, as clearly shown in O'Brien's Fig. 3. In fact, O'Brien does not disclose any specific relationship between film thickness and the distance between discharge opening of its extrusion coating apparatus 10 and web 12. Therefore, O'Brien is incapable of teaching or suggesting the specific relationship between gap A and thickness B as defined in Applicant's independent claims 1 and 22-24. Likewise, O'Brien is incapable of teaching or suggesting the specific relationship between gap A and thickness B as defined in Applicant's new independent claim 25.

Applicant respectfully submits the following additional technical analysis.

As shown in Table 1 of the specification, a radiation image conversion panel according to the invention has improved uniformity. This improved uniformity is reflected in Table 1 under the headings "coating non-uniformity" and "variation in stimulated emission amounts (%)." One

skilled in the art would readily appreciate that these properties demonstrate improved structural characteristic of the panel. Accordingly, Applicant's claimed panel is structurally distinct from the panels disclosed in the prior art.

As explained in Applicant's Amendment filed April 2, 2003, if gap A is narrow, dust on a support, dust in a coating solution, lumps caused by partial drying of a coating solution, and the like are likely to be trapped at the edge of a coater, thus easily causing coating streaks. Further, because the coating solution is disposed on a base immediately after discharge, the rate of the edge portion being expanded to the outside becomes small, hence the edge portion is likely to swell.

On the other hand, if gap A is wide, the amount of air accompanying a base increases, and it becomes difficult to expel the air with a thickness of a coating solution. In a case that the coating solution is heavy, so as to have a density of 2 or more, such as in a case of a coating solution containing fluorescent material, it becomes difficult to support the solution by a surface tension. Both of these phenomena cause a surface to lack uniformity and separation of the solution.

The fact that the optimum value of A is set depending on the relationship with B, is disclosed only in Applicant's own specification. Yamazaki, Yanagita, and O'Brien neither teach nor disclose such a relationship.

Therefore, Applicant's independent claims 1 and 22-25, as well as the dependent claims 3, 5, 7, 20 and 26 (which incorporate all the novel and unobvious features of their base claim 1), are patentably distinct from the prior art references cited by the Examiner.

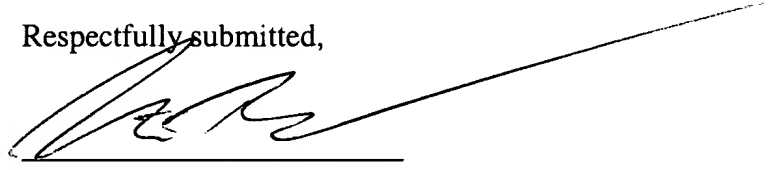
Supplemental Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln No. 09/449,625

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In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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WASHINGTON OFFICE



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Date: May 15, 2003

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APPENDIX

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 25 and 26 are added as new claims.